LGBTQ+ People & COVID

Ithaca College has compiled a comprehensive page of resources and guidance for the LGBTQ+ community during the crisis.

Welcome!

The mission of the Cornell University LGBTQ Colleague Network Group is to raise awareness about workplace issues faced by LGBTQIA faculty and staff; provide networking opportunities for LGBTQIA faculty and staff and a forum to discuss topics of mutual interest and innovative solutions with senior leaders; and to support the recruitment and retention of LGBTQIA faculty and staff.

What we do:

Our group meets monthly for lunch and socializing. Our meetings usually feature a presentation or facilitated discussion. We also network with external LGBTQIA groups and organize events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities to support our community.

Have an announcement, info you'd like to share, or suggestions for topics or guest presenters? Let us know!

Join the LGBTQ+ CNG

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Coming up!
Let’s get together to celebrate the end of the semester and enjoy a little festive fun!

Whip up a fabulous mocktail, toddy, or cocoa, don your fave gay apparel, and join us on Zoom for some fa-la-la-la-la and merriment:

All are welcome, and we encourage participation from folx of diverse ethnicities, races, identities, and backgrounds!

On another, very important note: the holidays can be a challenging time for many, especially in the LGBTQ+ community. If you’re struggling, please seek help.

- Faculty & Staff Assistance Program provides free counseling services to benefits-eligible employees and retirees, and their spouses/partners. 24/7 number for urgent concerns: 607-255-2673
- Cornell employees and family members can also receive free counseling from eni Confidential Counseling Services (not affiliated with Cornell).
- Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860 (includes Spanish speakers too)
- Crisis Text line: Text Home to 741741 or Steve to 741741 (matched with volunteers of color)
- The Network/la Red: Interpersonal Violence Hotline for LGBTQ people and those involved in Kink and/or Poly affiliated communities: 800-832-1901 (includes Spanish speakers too)
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) : 800-656-4673 (also offers live chat)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline : 800-273-8255
- The LGBTQ+ CNG board members are here for you, too!
Meetings & Events

Monthly Meetups

We get together for lunchtime (12:00 - 1:00 pm EST) meetings on the second Friday of each month. Meetings are a time to socialize, network, and sometimes feature guest speakers or presentations. Join our mailing list using the red signup button above to learn what's coming up next!

2021 Monthly Meeting Schedule

- November 12
- December 10

Join our Giving Back Committee:

One of the pillars of our work as a colleague network group is our commitment to giving back to our community. If you have an interest in being part of this committee, please email Sue Brightly (skk72@cornell.edu).

Pride

During the pandemic our CNG hosted a number of virtual Pride activities, including facilitated discussions, Drag Bingo, and a Pride-themed trivia evening. We plan to represent Cornell at the Central NY Pride parade in Syracuse the next time it's held.

Annual Fundraising Drive

In 2020 we held a sock and underwear drive to benefit local homeless youth through the Open Doors Program of Family & Children's Service of Ithaca. Thanks to the generosity of our Cornell colleagues, we were able to donate hundreds of articles of clothing. We’re excited to be supporting them in their efforts.
Volunteering

Join us in volunteering as a group for some of Cornell's big events: Employee Celebrations, Slope Day, Commencement, and more. It's always more fun when you know a few folks!

Meet Our Board

**Michael Betteken (he/him)**

I am excited to be a part of this CNG board and serve as the historian. At Cornell, I am the Senior Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) administrator within the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA) part of the Research Division. Before coming to Cornell, I worked to support a new chapter of PFLAG in North Carolina to support the parents of the local LGBTQ+ youth and to create a safe space for this group. I am very passionate about LGBTQ+ representation in all professionals and am looking forward to supporting LGBTQ+ staff here at Cornell. In my free time you can find me creating artisan soap and taking care of my cats and dog.

**Sue Brightly (she/her)**

Hi there! I’m currently serving as one of our board co-chairs. I work in HR Communications, and have been at Cornell for over seven years. I’m also an artist on the Ithaca Art Trail! I’m grateful for the opportunity to help make Cornell a more welcoming workplace and to support our LGBTQ+ community. I’m especially interested in advocating for LGBTQ+ families. Feel free to reach out with questions, suggestions, or just to say hi: [skk72@cornell.edu](mailto:skk72@cornell.edu)
Joseph Cannella (he/him/his)

Greetings colleagues and friends,

My name is Joseph Cannella (he/him/his) I currently work in the Office of the University Registrar. Further, I am privileged to serve on the Employee Assembly as the LGBTQ+ Representative at Large. Representatives at large serve in a unique space where they keep the mission of the entire Cornell Community in mind while also representing a specific subset of—in this case—Cornell LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters on staff.

It is my great honor to work with other EA members to identify future campus-wide priorities, find opportunities for collaboration, and—of course—institute policies to bring about change for the betterment of present and future LGBTQ+ faculty & staff.

For me, after serving in this position for several months, I see several needs emerging that could be addressed that would enhance the experience for all LGBTQ+ faculty and staff members: 1) I’d like to work with the CNGs to increase the activity of the Colleague Network Groups. I think that the CNGs are an important way for us to stay connected. Further, 2) I feel a need to enhance our campus’ commitment to “Safe Zone” initiatives. To that end, I will be working with the LGBTQ-RC and Chris Lujan and others to help shape how this initiative evolves.

I want to let every LGBTQ+ faculty and staff member know that I am at your service. Please do not hesitate to contact me via email at jjc379@cornell.edu. Again, if there is an issue, concern, comment, or idea that you feel will help our “Cornell community family”, I welcome you to reach out to me.

Warmest Regards,

Joseph Cannella

jjc379@cornell.edu

Employee Assembly LGBTQ+ Representative at Large

Crissi Dalfonzo (she/her)

Hey y’all! I currently serve as one of the co-chairs of the CNG board. I’ve been at Cornell for three and a half years, working in the LGBT Resource Center the whole time. I’m passionate about social justice education, Inclusive language, and creating community. One of my top priorities on the board is creating opportunities for LGBTQ+ staff and faculty to connect with one another and form community. Outside of work, I’m a dog mom, lover of all things sparkle and rainbow unicorn, and a lifelong knitter of over 20 years. Feel free to contact me at cdf589@cornell.edu with questions or ideas!
Foula Dimopoulos (ze/hir/hirs/hirself | he/him/his/his self)

(Bio & photo coming)

Zoe Roberts (she/her)

I’ve been a part of Cornell’s LGBTQ+ community since 2016 – first as an undergrad student with Haven (the student LGBTQ+ org), and now as an employee serving as a board member-at-large for our Colleague Network Group! I graduated with a B.A. in Information Science in 2020, and joined eCornell’s Product Team as an Associate Product Manager in March 2021. I enjoy living in Ithaca with my partner and cat, though I do miss the mountains in my home state Colorado. I love all things creative!

I look forward to creating opportunities for folks to connect with one another and build community! As a younger and newer employee, I also hope to welcome and be a resource for others in a similar place. My inbox is always open: Zer3@cornell.edu

Peter Vaillancourt (he/him)

Hello everyone, I am very excited to be joining the board of the LGBTQ+ Colleague Network Group (CNG) serving as a member-at-large! I am a Computational Scientist in the Center for Advanced Computing (CAC) which is part of the Research Division at Cornell.

Some of my work includes projects related to the intersection of advanced computing and social change as well as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives within academia, the technology industry, and the High-Performance Computing (HPC) community specifically. I have a passion for creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces where everyone can be their full selves, and thus thrive together to solve the urgent problems our world is facing. I especially see the need for current Cornell staff and faculty to have these spaces so that we have a framework with which to welcome diverse students and younger generations into the higher education space. I am glad to be a part of maintaining that space here through our CNG, and welcome all people with LGBTQIA+ identities to participate.

I also take graduate classes at Cornell in applied mathematics part-time, and read math books for fun. Outside of work and academics, I love spending time with my wife/life partner and our pets, playing the drums, and I’m just getting back into cycling, running, and rock climbing after my third knee surgery. If you are curious to know more about the CAC or my research, you can learn more here. Please feel free to email me if you would like to connect or are curious to know more.

FAQs

Who can join?

This group is intended to support Cornell employees who identify throughout the LGBTQIA spectrum or who are
questioning.

Are there membership dues?
Membership is free and supported by Cornell University.

Do I have to go to meetings, or any other membership requirements?
We hope you'll join us at our in-person meetings and events, but there are no attendance or membership requirements.

Can I only join one CNG at a time?
You're welcome to join multiple CNGs.

Resources

LGBTQ+ Resources for Cornell Employees
Visit this page for information about:

- Benefits - Marriage, Domestic Partnership, Parenting, Adoption
- Name Change, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation Fields in Workday, Legal Name & Gender Marker Change Process
- Cornell Policies
- Crisis Support
- Guides - Transgender Guide to Transitioning & Gender Affirmation in the Workplace; Gender-Inclusive Pronouns; Restroom/Facilities Use Guidelines
- Networking
- Local & Regional Resources

Ithaca LGBTQ History Walking Tour
Did you know that Ithaca:

- is the site of one of the 1st public declarations of the American bisexual movement
- played a crucial role in marriage equality
- was one of the 1st cities in the US to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation
- is where one of the 1st student-organized sit-ins for LGBTQ rights took place. ...and more!

Ithaca and Tompkins County hold unique and meaningful roles in local LGBTQ history and culture, as well as in the national LGBTQ rights movement and for communities across the globe.

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